

61 Columbia Street
Brookline, Massachusetts
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Professor Joshua Lederberg
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Dear Dr. Lederberg,

I owe you many apologies for getting this paper to you at such a late date. It seems that medical school refuses to leave free the large blocks of time that one needs to grapple with a long paper. But I did manage to get the material into coherent form and organize the lengthy bibliography that I promised you.

In all honesty, I am not entirely happy with this paper. I would like to have been able to present you with something more thoroughly researched and fully explored, but the topic and a severe shortage of time worked together to prevent that. This is by no means meant to excuse the work, as it will speak for itself. I certainly think that some of the ideas I've touched upon are worthwhile, and your comments will be greatly appreciated.

The reading that I did at Stanford during January has proved to be useful in many unexpected ways since I returned to Boston. In particular, I am using some of the material on early geneticists for a history of medicine course in which I serve as a teaching fellow for Barbara Rosenkrantz. I hope to present a section of the course on the eugenics movement and the notion of insanity and "feeble-mindedness" as inheritable according to simple Mendelian principles.

Your comments on Larry Miller's letter in The Lancet on the XYY controversy were most interesting, as Miller is a classmate of mine. I agree that the imperative is decidedly social in nature--it must be, as it would be difficult to formulate a scientific imperative for discontinuing this research. Miller is merely mouthing the ideas of a group of liberals at the Medical School (headed by Jon Beckwith and several other bacterial geneticists) who meet regularly to discuss this and related issues. As I have seen few compelling scientific reasons for continuing the XYY study, my own view is that this "social imperative" ought to win out for the time being. But Beckwith was extremely rash in his attacks, and he seems to have alienated more people than he has convinced.

Your remarks about a possible analogy between American reactions to Nazi racism and reactions to the persecution of Soviet Jewry have set me to thinking. I know little about the

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history of American protest against Soviet repression of Jews,
but I hope to find time to do some reading very soon.

Again, my apologies for taking so long to finish this work.
I look forward to your comments on the paper when you have time.
Over the past two months, your ideas and suggestions have sparked
my interest in several new subjects and forced me to think about
problems in new ways. For that, and for all of your help,
I am genuinely grateful.

With best regards,

Bob
Bob Waldinger